

Editorial: Toward Post-Western World and Afro-Eurasia

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One particular question has been discussed in academic and non-academic intellectual circles in several parts of the world: What is happening to the Western-dominated world? Will the next century continue to be a Western century, or will “the Rest” instead of the West dominate the worlds of politics, economy and culture? These discussions on “the rise of the rest” have started to resurface in academic circles, as well as in a more general form through media such as magazines or the columns of newspapers. The discussions in this regard seem to focus on three general areas: world politics, world economy and popular culture. The discussions regarding the coming nature of international politics attempt to analyze the dynamics of international relations over the coming decades and to answer a couple of core questions such as whether the US will continue to constitute the ‘hegemon’ of the system or, as “declinists” argue, the current principal player in world affairs will still be a great power but not the hegemon of the newly-emerging international system. Will the unipolarity, in political and military senses continue or will an anti-hegemonic alliance emerge onto the world stage and counterbalance the influence of the US in the coming decades?

As a noteworthy example of contributions to the discussion of “grand strategy”, “macro-history”, “the future of the World politics and economics”, I am going to first refer to Charles Kupchan’s very recent book *No One’s World: The West, The Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*. He argues, like some other scholars, that it is true that “the rest” is rising but it does not mean that the rest will gain superiority over the West. Kupchan, in his book, symbolically referred to “the Copenhagen Summit”, held in 2009, which had as its central focus the attempt to arrive at an environmental agreement to limit the emissions that increase “global warming”. Referring to the American and European failure to convince China, Brazil

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and India at the meeting, Kupchan argues that “the twenty-first century marks not the ultimate triumph of the West, but the emergence of a global landscape that is headed toward a turning point rather than an end point. The West is losing not only its material primacy as new powers rise, but also its ideological dominance.” He concludes that in the coming world “numerous power centers” will emerge and coexist and these centers will encompass their own versions of modernity (Kupchan, 2012: 2-4).

Richard Falk mentions a more radical shift in the world in his book, *the Declining World Order: America's Imperial Geopolitics*. He calculates the possibility of a “post-Western” world order in the future, and argues that “a definite post-Westphalian scenario is now likely to take shape within the next decade or so, and thus the contours of a new emergent world order are likely to change dramatically as the structure and dynamics of globalization evolve in the years ahead...” (Falk, 2004: 36). This is because the existing “Westphalian modes of regulatory authority” will not be in a position to manage the complexities of the world and countries following such modes will find themselves in a more difficult situation over the next decades. He accepts that the movement for humane global governance will not necessarily prevail, concluding that “such world order inconclusiveness is an insignia of this era!” (Falk, 2004: 37).

Of course here are observed competing views in this regard. Not all “strategists” believe that the Western powers would automatically be eclipsed by the ‘rising rest’. They believe that if the Western smart decision-makers could successfully manage the economic and political challenges of the twenty first century, the West would continue to dominate the world. John Ikenberry, for example, argues that the US-dominated international order will remain in the twenty first century, provided that the Western states “work to strengthen the rules and institutions that underpin that order... sink the roots of this order as deeply as possible” (Ikenberry, 2008: 24-5).

Fareed Zakaria also mentions about “the Post-American World” and “the rise of the rest”, and argues the world now is experiencing “the third great power shift of the modern era” (Zakaria, 2008: 2). However, Zakaria thinks that the coming world will be no dominated by ‘the rest’ because “the world we’re entering will look like Bollywood. It will be thoroughly modern-and thus powerfully shaped by the West-but it will also retain important elements of local culture.” (Zakaria, 2008: 82). Although Zakaria also explains how the “local and modern is growing side by side with global and Western” (Zakaria, 2008: 82), he in fact describes a Western-shaped World which will be further diluted by non-Western powers

and cultures if they exist in any perceptible sense. Some authors anticipate more strongly the continuation of the existing order in the twenty-first century in spite of some deep crisis in the Western world (Kagan, 2012; Brzezinski, 2012).

Whether the coming world order will be Western or Post-Western, non-Westphalian or post-Westphalian, nobody suspects that Asian, African and Eurasian values will contribute more to the existing Western-shaped world order. This will be not only in the areas of politics and economics, but also those of international business and trade, as Alvarez and Sauvart put it (Alvarez et al, 2011). When “the rising rest” is mentioned, Asiatic giants, China and India come to the fore correctly. Nonetheless, the rising Africa should not be neglected. According to famous British magazine *The Economist*, “over the last decade six of the world’s ten fastest-growing countries were African. In eight of the past ten years, Africa has grown faster than East Asia, including Japan. Even allowing for the knock-on effect of the northern hemisphere’s slowdown, the IMF expects Africa to grow by 6% this year and nearly 6% in 2012, about the same as Asia” (*The Economist*, 2011). This is also true for Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Central Asian states.

We publish *Afro Eurasian Studies* in Turkey to contribute to the discussions that will shape the coming World in terms of economics, business, trade and politics. We believe that Turkey, occupying an extremely important geopolitical location between the Occident and Orient; the Middle East and Europe; the Caucasia and the Mediterranean Sea; the North and the South, is at the epicentre of the changing world.

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